



Agricultural Resource Management Survey *Press Release*

Georgia Farmers Provide Financial Snapshot

[Athens, GA, January 7, 2004] –How are agricultural producers surviving when input costs such as hired labor, fertilizer, and fuel costs continue to rise? Are government program payments providing producers an adequate safety-net to allow them to make investments in land and equipment required of modern farming? Which agriculture sectors show improvement or are under financial stress? USDA will give Georgia farmers the chance to answer these questions by participating in the 2003 Agricultural Resource Management Survey.

During 2002, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) distributed to all United States producers \$7.3 billion in farm program payments, \$1.6 billion in conservation funding, \$2 billion in loan funds, and \$14.4 million in emergency loans. Data from the ARMS are used to measure the benefits of direct, counter-cyclical, and ad hoc emergency payments as producers continue to look to the marketplace for economic reward.

“Reliable, accurate descriptions of the current economic health of Georgia’s farms is crucial,” said State Statistician David Abbe, “especially when policymakers, farm organizations, analysts, local USDA agents, news media, farm suppliers, lenders, and others make decisions that affect growers.”

Congress studied the results from previous studies carefully when they crafted the 2002 Farm Bill.

Producers chosen to participate in the 2003 Agricultural Resource Management Survey will be visited by an interviewer beginning in February to complete the report at the farm operator’s convenience. Results will be published in a series of reports on the current farm financial situation.

Farm Production Expenditures, the first report with results from the survey, will be released July 15, 2004. For a copy of the finished report or to obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the National Agricultural Statistics Service website at www.usda.gov/nass/ or call 1-800-727-9540.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
GEORGIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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Find agricultural statistics for your county, State, and the Nation at www.usda.gov/nass/.